Statement

Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society is a non-governmental organization with a national and international scope; its origin is the Islamic Republic of Iran. In brief, it focuses on sustainable development issues and implements many projects all over the Islamic Republic of Iran that are in line with the Millennium Development Goals.

The organization's activities include:

1. Recognition of the many people exposed to extreme poverty and hunger all over the Islamic Republic of Iran and creation of free nutrition programmes for more than 1,000 children and their families in Tehran and seven other cities in the country. The organization also sent food packages to more than 10,000 families during the year;

2. Maintaining 14 centres all over the Islamic Republic of Iran for out-of-school children. These are unofficial schools called "Science Houses" which act as a bridge for Iranian children returning to the official education system once they have overcome obstacles. These Science Houses are also places for Afghan refugees to have their children who have been denied access to the traditional schools educated;

3. Women's empowerment programmes as a way to reduce poverty. This includes entrepreneurship projects such as weaving, tailoring, making food products for sale, as well as supporting literacy projects for illiterate mothers;

4. Providing children with free medical services to reduce child mortality and programmes for preventing child labour;

5. Implementing the programme "*Madaraneh*" (maternal), which is focused on pregnant mothers from poor regions who are in jail or who are homeless. This project provides them with food, supplements and pre-natal care. Almost 160 mothers are covered by this project and some of them are Afghan refugees;

6. Screening of addicted mothers for drugs and sexually transmitted infections;

7. A project in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was to create environment-friendly bags for regular household use;

8. Incorporating more than 9,000 volunteer members, mostly university students, to carry out programmes.